

'There is always a scientific explanation'

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KUANTAN: Do ghosts really exist?

Going by the number of hits on YouTube for ghostly videos and the number of people who flock to cineplexes to watch movies on the supernatural, many, whether or not they believe in ghosts, are interested in all things spooky.

Paranormal researchers have also developed various tools to detect "them", including electromagnetic field (EMF) detectors, motion sensors, digital electronic voice recorders, vibration detectors and infra-red thermometers.

Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) researcher Dr Mahyuddin Ismail said stories of ghosts existed in every community, but have different names and appearances.

"They may be known as *pocong*, *langsir* or *hantu raya* among Malays but to Westerners, they are called restless souls and vampires," said the lecturer, who helped develop the world's first anti-hysteria kit.

Although there was always a scientific explanation on reported paranormal activities, he said as a Muslim, one must accept the fact that *jinn* (genie) and the devil did exist.

"God created them from fire and, therefore, we cannot see them with our naked eyes.

"We may be able to detect them using a heat detector but the right temperature level is still unknown."

Mahyuddin said some of the diseases that were in the past believed to have been caused by unseen entities were actually due to bacterial or viral infections.

"Some people think that they have inherited *saka* (guardian spirits kept by their ancestors), although they actually inherited the same disease because of genetic factors."

He urged the public not to be too obsessed with ghosts, but to instead focus on other



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matters that could benefit them and the community.

"Being obsessed might encourage them to be involved in activities that are against the teachings of Islam, including seeking help of *bomoh* to force 'evil' out of them."

Mahyuddin said his studies showed that the best way to cure those possessed by unknown entities or hysteria was to use lime, pepper and salt.

"There's no need to use *jampi* (mantra) to cure them. Salt has healing properties."

He said those who wanted to know about the issues and his research could take a look at his blog: www.mahyuddin09.blogspot.com.